

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO:	Development and Conservation Control Committee	5 th January 2005
AUTHOR/S:	Director of Development Services	

S/2080/04/F - Sawston 7 Houses and Garages - Land r/o 16-20 Cambridge Road for Park Hill Homes Ltd

Recommendation: Approval
Date of Determination: 7th December 2004

Site and Proposal

1. The application site is a 0.17 hectare plot of land located to the rear/east, and situated within the garden areas of, three detached two-storey dwellings, Nos. 16, 18 and 20 Cambridge Road. To the east are detached bungalows whilst to the south is the police station site. This is currently being redeveloped and comprises a police station and 8 dwellings. The dwellings directly adjoining the application site are 2¹/₂ storey brick and tile properties.
2. The full application, submitted on 12th October 2004, and amended on 26th November 2004, seeks to erect seven dwellings on the site. These would be two storey brick and tile dwellings designed to match the general design of the properties on the adjoining site to the south. Access to the site would be via Cambridge Road and the existing point of access serving the adjoining police station and eight dwellings. The density of the development equates to 40 dwellings per hectare.

Planning History

3. **S/0014/03/F** – Planning consent granted for the police station and 8 dwellings on adjoining land to the south.

Planning Policy

4. Sawston is designated within the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 as a Rural Growth Settlement where **Policy SE2** states residential development will be permitted providing, amongst other matters, the development would be sensitive to the character of the village and the amenities of neighbours. There should be an appropriate mix, and a minimum density of 30 dph should be achieved unless there are strong design grounds for not doing so.
5. **Policy HG11** of the Local Plan states that development to the rear of existing properties will only be permitted where the development would not :
 - Result in overbearing, overlooking or overshadowing of existing residential properties;
 - Result in noise and disturbance to existing residential properties through the use of its access;
 - Result in highway dangers through the use of its access; or
 - Be out of character with the pattern of development in the vicinity.

6. Policy HG10 of the Local Plan requires a mix of types, sizes and affordability and a high quality design and distinctiveness.
7. **Policy P1/3** of the County Structure Plan 2003 stresses the need for a high standard of design and a sense of place which corresponds to the local character of the built environment.

Consultation

8. **Sawston Parish Council** objects to the application for the following reasons:
 - It is a back garden development;
 - It is overdevelopment of the site;
 - There will be traffic problems associated with this development.
6. **The Chief Environmental Health Officer** raises no objections in principle although does express concern about noise disturbance to nearby residents during the construction period. As such, a condition restricting the hours of use of power operated machinery during the construction period needs to be attached to any planning consent.
7. **The County Archaeologist** states that the site lies in an area of high archaeological potential. As such, the site should be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation and this can be secured by a condition of any planning consent.
8. **The Environment Agency** advises that the application falls to this Authority to respond in respect of flood risk and surface water drainage issues. Informatives are therefore appropriate in this instance, where the site is not in a high or medium flood risk zone.
9. **The Local Highways Authority** raises no objections to the application as amended. However, the developer has not proceeded with an Agreement to facilitate the adoption of the section of access road given permission under S/0014/03/F. Is the Council happy with a further seven dwellings served off a private access road and who will be responsible for the future maintenance of the road that also serves the police station?
10. **The Trees and Landscape Officer** raises no objections although comments that a large, mature apple tree in the rear garden of No.18 will be lost. However, this contributes only in a visual sense to adjoining gardens and does not therefore merit a TPO. A coppiced walnut in the far corner of Plot 15 could be retained although the semi-mature ash and sycamore trees, all of mediocre quality, will be compromised by Plot 15.
11. **The Building Inspector** advises that the road layout is acceptable and of sufficient width for emergency vehicles.

Representations

12. Letters of objection have been received from 5 local residents, 14 and 22 Cambridge Road, 7a Babraham Road, 166 Woodland Road and 4 Eccles Close. The main points raised are:
 - Loss of privacy to bungalows to rear;
 - Loss of view from bungalows to rear;

- If approved, the walnut tree should be maintained;
- There is a restrictive covenant on No.16 Cambridge Road making it impossible for any building to go ahead;
- The access road cannot support the amount of cars that would use the road if the new houses were to be built and cannot support refuse collectors and emergency services;
- Extra houses will increase drainage problems associated with the adjacent site;
- Development will increase traffic problems at the Cambridge Road/Hillside/Babraham Road/New Road junction;
- First floor window in the side elevation of the dwelling adjoining No.22 Cambridge Road should be fitted with obscure glass and a close boarded fence erected along the boundary.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

13. The key issues to consider in the determination of this application are:

- Impact upon character and appearance of the area;
- Residential amenity;
- Highway safety;

Impact upon character and appearance of area

14. The proposal seeks to erect seven dwellings on the site comprising one 4-bedroom detached property, a terrace of four 3-bedroom houses and a pair of semi-detached 3-bedroom dwellings. The terrace and semi-detached dwellings are approximately 7.7 metres high whilst the detached house has a total ridge height of 9 metres. The properties would be constructed using a combination of brick and render for the walls and natural slate for the roofs. The design of the dwellings reflects those of the properties being constructed on the adjoining site to the south (which were approved under planning ref: S/0014/03/F).
15. Concerns have been expressed regarding the principle of allowing backland development on the site. Given that housing of a similar design has been permitted on the site to the south, I consider the development would not be out of keeping with the character and pattern of housing in the vicinity. In addition, the site is set well back (approximately 60 metres) from Cambridge Road and the dwellings would not therefore be dominant in views of the site afforded through the gaps between the detached dwellings sited along Cambridge Road.

Residential amenity

16. Objections were received from No.166 Woodland Road, a bungalow sited to the rear/east on the grounds of overlooking from first floor windows in the rear elevation of the northernmost plot. I have viewed the site from this neighbouring property and, whilst there is a reasonable amount of screening along the common boundary, it is predominantly deciduous in nature. The plans have therefore been amended to site the northernmost dwellings 30 metres away from the rear elevation of the adjoining bungalow. This distance, together with the fact that there is sufficient space to ensure the retention of the walnut tree in the north-eastern corner of the site and to provide additional planting if necessary, leads me to conclude that the impact of the development on No.166 Woodland Road is now acceptable.

17. The distances from the front of the dwellings to the rear of Nos. 16, 18 and 20 Cambridge Road is sufficient to avoid any undue harm to the amenities of the occupiers of the existing and new properties. I do, however, concur with the concerns expressed by No.22 Cambridge Road and would advise that the first floor window in the north elevation of the northernmost plot be obscure glazed given the proximity of this dwelling to the common boundary.
18. The occupiers of No.14 Cambridge Road have commented that there is a covenant attached to No.16 Cambridge Road preventing the development of this site. The applicant has signed the relevant certificate and served notice on No.16. In addition, this Authority has notified No.16 and has not received any direct comments or objections relating to this matter. I have sought further clarification from the applicant's agent. However, the granting of planning permission does not convey an automatic right to develop land and the provisions of any covenant would need to be resolved separately by the developers.
19. With respect to the walnut tree in the north-eastern corner of the site, whilst the Trees and Landscape Officer has advised that it is not of sufficient quality to require its retention, it does provide visual protection of the development to the occupiers of the bungalows to the east. As such, I would recommend that any consent be subject to a landscaping condition with a view to incorporating the retention of the tree into a landscaping scheme for the site.

Highway safety

20. The measurements of the access to the site comply with the Highways Authority's requirements although the road has not been adopted. No specific objections have been raised by the Highways Authority to the use of the access by a further seven dwellings. I have asked the applicant's agent to clarify responsibilities for maintenance of the road and this will be reported verbally to Members at the Committee meeting.

Recommendation

21. Approval, as amended by drawings date stamped 26th November 2004, subject to the following conditions:
 1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (Reason A);
 2. Sc5a – Details and samples of materials for external walls and roofs (Rc5aii);
 3. No development shall take place until a 1.8 metre high close boarded fence has been erected on the northern site boundary. (Reason – To protect the privacy of adjoining residents);
 4. Sc23 – First floor window in north elevation of Plot 15 to be obscure glazed (Rc23);
 5. Sc5b – Details of surface water drainage (Rc5b);
 6. Rc5c – Details of foul water drainage (Rc5c);
 7. Sc51 – Landscaping (Rc51);
 8. Sc52 – Implementation of landscaping (Rc52);
 9. Sc60 – Boundary treatment details (Rc60);
 10. Sc66 – Archaeological investigation (Rc66);
 11. During the period of construction no power operated machinery shall be operated on the premises before 08.00 hours on weekdays and 08.00 hours on Saturdays nor after 18.00 hours on weekdays and 13.00 hours on Saturdays (nor at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays) unless otherwise

previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority in accordance with any agreed noise restrictions (Rc26);

Informatives

Reasons for Approval

1. The approved development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
 - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:** P1/3 (Sustainable design in built development);
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:** SE2 (Development in Rural Growth Settlements), HG10 (Housing Mix and Design) and HG11 (Backland Development).
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
 - Residential amenity;
 - Visual impact on the locality
 - Highway safety/parking issues.
 - Impact on trees.

General

1. Should driven pile foundations be proposed, before works commence a statement of the method for construction of these foundations shall be submitted and agreed by the District Environmental Health Officer so that noise and vibration can be controlled.
2. During construction there shall be no bonfires or burning of waste on site except with the prior permission of the Environmental Health Officer in accordance with best practice and existing waste management legislation.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: Local Plan, Structure Plan, File Refs: S/2080/04/F and S/0014/03/F.

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